

The New York Times noted this past weekend, this position is contrary to decades of economic research that shows increases in the minimum wage have lifted pay without hurting employment.

Americans deserve a raise, and raising the minimum wage will help to protect U.S. workers, grow our economy, and build ladders of opportunity into the middle class.

THE DAY WE FIGHT BACK

(Mr. YODER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YODER. Madam Speaker, each day Americans use new and more common technology to communicate with each other, to read online, share photographs, shop and purchase goods, do their banking, and countless other everyday tasks.

In this new tech age, Americans live their lives online, yet the Federal Government acts as if these communications are not subject to Fourth Amendment protections. In fact, the IRS has claimed that Americans “do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy” when it comes to their emails being read by the Federal Government.

Thousands of Americans are joining together today in an effort to bring awareness to some of the unconstitutional and intrusive surveillance practices of our United States Government.

February 11 is “The Day We Fight Back.” It is a reminder that law-abiding Americans have certain expectations of privacy and rights guaranteed in our Constitution that our government cannot unreasonably search and seize our personal property, including electronic property, without just cause. That is why I am a lead sponsor of the Email Privacy Act, which will apply the same Fourth Amendment protections to our electronic communication as the paper documents in your home file cabinet.

Madam Speaker, let’s pass this bipartisan bill. Let’s draw clear lines to ensure our government protects the constitutional rights of every American.

CONGRESS MUST ALSO MAKE 2014 A YEAR OF ACTION

(Mrs. BEATTY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, 2 weeks ago, President Obama stood in this Chamber and addressed the Nation, declaring 2014 as the “Year of Action”: a year of action to put more Americans back to work and continue to make sure that middle class families across the country are secure in their jobs and their homes; a year of action to continue fighting for equal pay, for equal work, in order to strengthen the American family and ensure fairness in the workplace for women; a year of action to understand that, when women succeed, America succeeds.

Just today, I witnessed in the 100 years of the Federal Reserve to have a female Chair, Janet Yellen, come before us.

A year of action to make sure that American students can have dreams and that they can have an affordable education.

We must understand that we must work together. Democrats, Madam Speaker, are doing their part. We invite our Republican colleagues to understand we need a year of action.

NATIONAL COURT REPORTING AND CAPTIONING WEEK

(Mr. ROSS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor National Court Reporting and Captioning Week, taking place from February 16 to February 22, a week that serves to recognize the value and importance that court reporters and captioners have made in American society.

As a lawyer who has spent over 25 years as a litigator, I have a profound respect and appreciation for those who preserve the official record.

Court reporters, broadcast captioners, and Communication Access Realtime Translation, or CART, captioners serve an integral role in my home State of Florida and throughout the United States. In fact, Florida has a particularly vibrant court reporting economy. My cousin, Les Renfro, has been one for over 35 years. They have over 400 small business owners in Florida, 1,300 court reporters and captioners, and three court reporting programs which will help fulfill the needs of an industry, an industry that the Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts will grow by 2022.

That is why I am happy to join the National Court Reporters Association in commemorating the week from February 16 to February 22 as National Court Reporting and Captioning Week.

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. HAHN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HAHN. Madam Speaker, every February we have the opportunity to celebrate Black History Month by honoring the great achievements and contributions of African American leaders who have courageously pushed boundaries and moved our country forward in the name of justice and equality. It is an honor for me today to mention some of the great leaders from Los Angeles who have made Black history:

Tom Bradley, from Los Angeles, the first African American to be mayor of Los Angeles; great leaders like Merv Dymally, the first African American Lieutenant Governor of California; Congresswoman Juanita Millender-

McDonald, the first African American woman to chair the House Administration Committee; Aja Brown, the first African American female mayor of Compton; and my colleague, Congresswoman KAREN BASS, the first Black woman to be speaker of any State legislature in U.S. history.

This year is the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Civil Rights Act, but this milestone should be a reminder of the work that still needs to be done. We can’t forget that, for many Americans, the promise of civil rights and equality remains unfulfilled. So, today and every day, let us reaffirm our commitment.

PASS A BIPARTISAN FLOOD INSURANCE BILL

(Ms. CASTOR of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge the House Speaker and the Republican leadership to take up the bipartisan flood insurance bill as soon as possible.

Hardworking families all across America, and plenty of small businesses as well, are facing exorbitant increases in their flood insurance rates. This is very harmful to their economic security and is really putting a damper on the economic recovery in communities all across the country. We need the Congress to fix this.

After the reform bill was passed last session, no one imagined these exorbitant increases in flood insurance rates. The best course of action right now is to take up the bipartisan Senate-passed flood insurance bill that passed on January 30.

We can work on this together, but we need action now.

WHAT DO WOMEN WANT FOR VALENTINE’S DAY?

(Ms. HANABUSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HANABUSA. Madam Speaker, February 14 is Valentine’s Day, a great commercial event. But what is it that women really want for Valentine’s?

It may differ for each of us, but I believe we can all agree on one thing: we want equality.

Women want equal pay for equal work.

Women want equal access to health care, not paying more for our health care premiums, not having pregnancy defined as a preexisting condition, and not having decisions as to our body made for us by the denial of contraceptive services.

Women want to be treated as political equals, recognized for the work we do, what we have contributed, not looked upon as second-class citizens, not deemed less, somehow, because our right to vote is less than 100 years old and our great country will be celebrating its 238th birthday.